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October 23, 2013

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Members of the House of Representatives:

On behalf of the nearly 3 million skilled craft professionals who comprise the 13 national and international unions of the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO, I write in emphatic support of the passage of H.R. 3080, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2013.

This critical piece of legislation will provide the federal resources necessary to invest in water resources infrastructure for addressing our nation's ports, levees, dams, and inland waterways. Congress last passed a Water Resources Development Act in 2007--far too long ago. The backlog of projects is growing and these delays are impacting the integrity of our nation's navigation network. The American Society of Civil Engineers, in their 2013 Report Card for America's Infrastructure, gave our nation's inland waterways the grade of D-, the nation's dams a D, our levees a D, and America's ports a C. We must do better.

Moving this bill forward has not been an easy feat. I would like to congratulate Chairman Shuster and Ranking Member Rahall for recognizing that our nation's water resources play a critical role in job creation, public safety and contribute to the strength of our overall economy. The leadership displayed by the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has demonstrated that through strong leadership you can rise above extreme partisanship, do the right thing, and move our country forward.

It is clear that passage of WRRDA will offer strategic investments in the nation's navigation network, but perhaps even more compelling for my membership, it will have a dramatic effect on the hardest hit segment of the economy--construction. Unemployment in our industry remains high and enacting this reauthorization will create much needed jobs.

I urge your strong support for H.R. 3080, as this bill represents a major victory for bipartisanship, for jobs, and for much needed economic recovery and growth.

Sincerely,

Sean McGarvey
President